

# On the Road

## THE RELIEF ROUTE — SR 1

### SR-1 PROJECT WINS INTERNATIONAL AWARD



The International Erosion Control Association [IECA] has awarded DelDOT's SR-1 Relief Route Project its highest award for 1999, its Environmental Grand Achievement Award.

It was not an easy award to win. The SR-1 project was up against 37 entries from 7 different countries. Its selection required an assessment not only of the project's field performance to control erosion and sedimentation, but also included a review of DelDOT's specifications, construction details, internal policies associated with environmental compliance, and training and certification requirements of those people carrying out the work.

The award gives DelDOT staff a sense of accomplishment in their work. "We try very hard to deliver our projects to the public in an environmentally sensitive way and it's nice that our efforts have been recognized by an association of environmental professionals like IECA", said DelDOT's SR-1 Project Manager, Rob McCleary, when asked about the award. "This is an award that recognizes DelDOT's SR-1 project, but is also a recognition of the State of Delaware's Sediment and Stormwater Program. Other agencies around the State with similar environmental programs can share in this accomplishment. We rely on our counterparts at DNREC, New Castle County, and the Soil Conservation Districts for advice and

guidance on many environmental issues and our success is due, to a large extent, on the support we have enjoyed from our colleagues."

When compared to Transportation projects elsewhere, it is DelDOT's hope that the public recognizes the difference in our projects. From the efforts we make to control erosion, to the wetland mitigation sites we have built, to the responsiveness we seek and try to return to the public, we believe we are delivering the highest quality projects on behalf of the citizens of Delaware. Since 1985, local participation in more than 15 major public workshops, hundreds of meetings with local community organizations, and thousands of personal inquiries have helped steer the project along its award winning path. ■

#### • ST. GEORGES BRIDGE UPDATE

Negotiations over saving the St. George Bridge are again at a stalemate. Despite a \$20 million dollar cost to demolish it, and the possibility of needing additional access over the canal again as early as the year 2010, the Army Corps of Engineers this winter renewed its pledge to demolish the old bridge.

According to Delaware Secretary of Transportation, Anne P. Canby, two issues still block an alternative resolution to the matter that would transfer ownership to a private corporation. First, it has not been possible to draft an agreement that would protect State taxpayers against future liability for the federally owned bridge. Second, it has not been possible to develop a viable financial package that would not unduly burden Delaware taxpayers.

The Corps must still meet several Federal and State requirements before they can proceed with demolition including environmental and historical significance issues. At the moment there is no federal funding authority for any demolition work. The State of Delaware stands by its position that the Bridge should be maintained and is continuing to pursue the matter through its congressional delegation. However, as DelDOT itself has no present involvement in this matter, those seeking further details are encouraged to contact the Army Corps of Engineers District Office in Philadelphia. ■



Delaware Department of  
Transportation

Anne P. Canby  
Secretary

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#### IN THIS ISSUE:

- Project Milestones .....2
- Interview with Rob McCleary.....3

# Mile STONES



## • WHAT THE HECK ARE THOSE BIG PILES OF DIRT?

We've received more than a few inquiries about our operations near Fieldsboro. We can assure you the rumors about DelDOT building Delaware's first ski resort are completely unfounded. Actually, those small mountains you see are stockpiles of soil that will be used as fill material along future sections of SR-1. Much of the stockpiled material has been placed along the future alignment and will be left in place. But several of the stockpiles are temporary and will be removed once the project is completed. We were fortunate to find soils on the Odessa Bypass segment with excellent qualities for road building. Rather than wasting this resource, we moved it to the next section south of Odessa. The material was carefully classified and segregated into uniform types used for various purposes: support for fills over soft subsoils, structural backfill, and topsoil to name a few. Believe it or not, we know exactly how much of each type of soil is in each pile and will mine it back out of the piles during the next phases of construction.

## • EZ PASS

As you may have seen on I-95, EZ Pass is now being extended to SR-1. EZ Pass, the electronic toll collection system that gives you the freedom to keep moving through toll plazas without stopping, became operational on April 6th at the SR-1 Dover Toll Plaza. A second toll plaza now under construction at Biddles Corner just south of the C&D Canal will also be equipped with EZ Pass. The ramp tollbooths at Denny's Road in Dover, the south Smyrna interchange and Boyds Corner Interchange north of Odessa will have EZ Pass as well. The Biddles Corner Toll Plaza will have two express lanes in each direction that will allow drivers with EZ Pass to go through the toll plaza at the posted highway speed. At the other tollbooths, you will have to slow down, but you will not need to stop. That will allow EZ Pass booths to process close to 700 vehicles per lane per hour as compared to about 400 for traditional manned booths.

EZ Pass saves you time and money. Automatic discounts will be made for EZ Pass customers at the Denny's Road Toll Plaza and the Boyds Corner interchange, eliminating the need for stopping to pick up those discount tickets. For you car pool

commuters, check out the special discount rates for high occupancy vehicles (HOV) on SR-1 and the Delaware Turnpike. It's in the fine print on the back of the application. Remember, EZ Pass is being installed along most major corridors in the mid-Atlantic and Northeastern United States. When you get EZ Pass, you are on your way! To get EZ Pass, call 1-888-Auto-Toll.

## • ODESSA SECTION UPDATE

The section of SR-1 Relief Route between the C&D Canal and Sycamore Farms south of Odessa is progressing on schedule, and is due to be completed in November, 1999. When one considers that over \$3 Million worth of additional work has been added to the project, it's truly amazing that the project is able to stay on schedule.

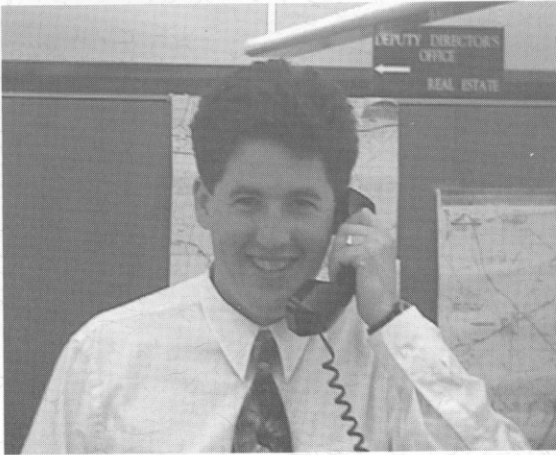
The construction schedule is of particular importance for this segment of SR-1. A delay in opening would cost the State dearly in lost toll revenue. We estimate toll collections will be about \$25,000 a day at Biddles Corner. A one month delay equates to \$750,000 in lost revenue. Suffice it to say, we are making every effort to stay on track.

Some of the added work included electronic toll collection at the Biddles Corner Toll Plaza and at the ramp toll booth at Boyds Corner. We also added a partial interchange at South Saint Georges in accordance with Federal requirements to accommodate free access over the new C&D Canal Bridge. Timing of our construction operations has grown much tighter as a result of the added work, but our contractor has shown tremendous resolve in incorporating the extra work into the existing schedule. This has forced some construction sequencing changes and temporary road closures. We brought these issues to the community and everyone has been very understanding so far. We appreciate the cooperation.

## • ROAD 420 TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURE

As those of you who live near Boyds Corner are painfully aware, Road 420 east of U.S. 13 was temporarily closed in mid-February. It will reopen by Memorial Day weekend. This closure was necessitated by changes resulting from the failed dealing this past winter over the old Saint Georges Bridge on U.S. 13. When the plan to transfer the bridge to Hardcore Composites was scrapped, the work that was to be completed by Hardcore Composites was added to the current SR-1 construction. As a result, we had to make a few changes to the construction sequencing in order to add this extra work and still keep the project on schedule. Detours now route motorists around the closed area. However, the road is still open to emergency vehicles and firemen responding to calls in their personal vehicles. All others are urged to stay out of the work area for your own safety and that of the construction workers. Police will be ticketing non-authorized vehicles attempting to use the emergency vehicle cross-over.

# One PERSPECTIVE



*"One Perspective" is a regular feature of On the Road. The interviews presented here provide readers with a personal, behind-the-scenes look at planning, design and construction activities associated with SR 1, the US Route 13 Relief Route.*

*For this Spring 1999 issue, One Perspective met with Robert (Rob) McCleary, who is the new Project Manager for the Relief Route.*

*Rob was promoted to the position last summer following the advancement of the previous Project Manager, David DuPlessis, to the position of DelDOT's Subdivision-Utilities Engineer. Now fully settled into the position, Rob was asked to talk about himself and his views on how the project is going.*

**OTR:** Tell me about your background. Are you originally from this area?

**RMcC:** I wasn't born in Delaware, but I've been here long enough to be considered local. I went to Caesar Rodney High School in Camden and then graduated with a Civil Engineering Degree from the University of Delaware in 1986. But I think the notion of the SR-1 project has been around longer than I have. While doing a research paper for my degree, I found transportation and traffic studies for the route that dated well back into the 1950's.

**OTR:** What did you do before getting involved in the SR-1 Relief Route Project?

**RMcC:** Before I took this job I was the Storm Water Engineer for the Department of Transportation [DelDOT], where I ran an environmental regulatory program dealing with drainage, erosion and sediment control, and stormwater management. I did bridge design work at DelDOT and highway design at Whitman Requardt Consultants before that. I've been doing civil and highway design work for the last 12 years. And between these jobs, I also worked for Delaware State Parks, part of the Department of Natural Resources. That job was a lot of fun.

**OTR:** What did you do there, build playgrounds?

**RMcC:** The Parks job gave me the opportunity to take on a lot of responsibility very early in my career. They have a small design staff and a lot of work, so I got a chance to do a wide variety of things like building renovations, modern improved campground facilities, timber bridges, boat ramps, and yes, even playgrounds. I was deeply involved with all aspects of planning, surveying, design, and construction of the projects I worked on. The parks projects seemed to touch so many individuals in positive ways. Working there gave me an appreciation of people, aesthetics, and environmental stewardship. The projects were generally less controversial. I liked that. Those jobs usually left me with a good feeling about what I was working on and a real sense of accomplishment.

**OTR:** So do you consider yourself an Environmentalist?

**RMcC:** Personally, I come from an environmental background. I have strong beliefs along those lines, and I don't mind saying that. I think I can help improve the sensitivity of management as a whole to that aspect of the job. The fact that the SR-1 project is known to have always been on the forefront of environmental design was certainly an encouraging factor in my decision to take on this position and all the challenges that go with a job of this magnitude. (See cover article)

**OTR:** Do you see any major hurdles that still need to be addressed to complete the SR-1 Relief Route Project?

**RMcC:** I believe it's basically all on track. Most of the big issues I think have already been handled. But there is still a lot of work to do making late design changes. The big one is at Black Diamond road, where we've had to raise the profile of the highway to accommodate the reinstated road crossing there. We've also had to pick up extra work at the access ramp just south of the C&D Canal because the private consortium deal to take over the St Georges Bridge fell through.

**OTR:** Do you still think the Odessa section of the SR-1 Relief Route project will be completed in November this year and the entire project completed in 2003 as presently projected?

**RMcC:** Yes. The new work has added a considerable time commitment, but we are doing everything we can to try to stay on track. We've had to make some sequencing changes to the construction schedule that included closing Pole Bridge Road for a few months. We met with our elected officials and representatives from the community, the Odessa Fire Co., and the police. Everyone was understanding and very supportive of what we're trying to accomplish out there. We're very lucky to be able to deal with such cooperative folks. ■

## CAN YOU GUESS:

- 1.) What is the amount of soil now stockpiled at Fieldboro? (see photo at left)
- 2.) What is the total value of the 33 contracts awarded so far on the construction of the SR-1 Relief Route Project.

(answers: page 4)

## TO OUR READERS

The State of Delaware and the project team are committed to continuing the citizen input process during the design and construction phases of the project. We invite you to write to us with questions or comments regarding *On the Road*.

## For More INFORMATION

### CONTACT DeIDOT BY MAIL

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PO Box 778  
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### BY E-MAIL

[webmaster@mail.dot.state.de.us](mailto:webmaster@mail.dot.state.de.us)

### WEBSITE

[www.state.de.us/deldot](http://www.state.de.us/deldot)

### BY PHONE

- Public information: contact Michele Ackles, Manager of External Affairs, at 800-652-5600
- Design issues: contact Robert McCleary, Project Manager, at 302-760-2280
- Environmental issues: contact Terry Fulmer, Assistant Director of Planning, at 302-760-2095
- Right-of-way acquisition and relocation: contact Wayne Rizzo, Chief of Real Estate, at 302-760-2220
- Construction issues: contact Tom Clements, Construction Engineer, at 302-734-9533

("Mile Stones" continued from page 2)

### • BLACK DIAMOND ROAD UNDERPASS

As the result of DelDOT's commitment to effective public involvement in its highway planning and design process, the bridging of SR-1 over Black Diamond Road has been reinstated. This is contrary to a value engineering analysis done in the early 1990's that recommended converting Black Diamond Road to cul-de-sac streets on either side of the highway.

In response to citizen concerns, DelDOT's design staff conducted two public meetings with residents, business people, State and local government officials, school district officials, emergency service personnel from the fire companies, and State and County Police from the immediate vicinity affected by the previously proposed closing of Black Diamond Road.

### ANSWERS:

1.) 1,074,190  
cubic yards

2.) \$411,005,131.82

Comments from those two initial meetings were used to develop alternative designs and to propose a preferred alternative. All alternatives were then displayed at a follow-up public workshop in November at Smyrna High School.

The option to bridge SR-1 over Black Diamond Road was overwhelmingly supported by the participants of the workshop. Most people expressed concern that eliminating the direct connection to U.S. 13 at Black Diamond Road would be detrimental to the public safety and welfare. However, some residents preferred the cul-de-sac option because it would eliminate the traffic and speeding problems on Black Diamond Road. In the end, the need to maintain this connection in support of regional traffic needs compelled DelDOT to change the design. DelDOT has now stepped up its design schedule to accommodate this change in time for advertisement of the Smyrna to Townsend segment this fall. ■